

THE
DRAMATIC CENSOR;
OR,
Weekly Theatrical Report.

NUMBER XIV.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1800.

*Sed videt hunc omnis domus, et vicinia tota
Introrsum turpem, speciosum pelle decora.
Nec furtum feci, nec fugi, si mihi dicat
Servus; " habes pretium, loris non ureris" ajo.
Non hominem occidi; " Non pascas in cruce corvos."
Sum bonus, et frugi. Renuit, negat atque Sabellus.
Cautus enim metuit foveam lupo, accipiterque
Suspectos laqueos, opertum milium hamum.
ODERUNT PECCARE BONI VIRTUTIS AMORE.
Tu nihil admittes in te, formidine pœnæ.
Sit spes fallendi, miscebis sacra profanis.*

DRAMATIC WRITERS, who desire to have an EARLY Review of their Publications, are requested to send a Copy to the Editor, at JUSTINS'S Printing-Office, Pemberton Row, Gough Square.

DRURY-LANE, SATURDAY, *March 29*, 1800.

PIZARRO—*Sheridan*. OF AGE TO-MORROW.

“**T**HERE is,” as SHAKESPEARE justly observes, “a tide in the affairs of men.” Mr. SHERIDAN has made a practical application of this remark, and “taken it at the full.” Success has been the natural consequence. *Pizarro*, even divested of the charms of novelty, retains its magic influence.

VOL. II. A

influence, and *fashion* now commands a crowded house to every representation of this motley drama, which appears to lose none of its pristine attractions from repetition. Indeed, the inimitable acting of Mr. KEMBLE, in the arduous character of *Rolla*, never *can* pall upon a refined and cultivated mind. It is the *declared* opinion of the first dramatic genius of the age, of no less a judge of Theatrical merit, than Mr. SHERIDAN himself, that GARRICK, even in the *zenith* of his fame, never evinced greater powers and professional excellence. Talents thus honourably superior, and thus honourably exerted, reflect lustre, not merely on the favoured individual in whose possession they are vested, but on that line of life, which he has selected for his sphere of action.

We dwell with pleasure on this topic, as we have been unjustly accused of illiberal prejudices, and of a wish to degrade the profession in general. Nothing was ever more foreign to our intentions—no charge ever more falsely advanced. It is because we honour and venerate the profession, that we are solicitous to see its *dignity* supported. But towards the accomplishment of an object so devoutly to be wished, *propriety of conduct*, on the part of the Performers, is an indispensable requisite. They must themselves, in this respect, be the “makers of their own fortune.” It is not the high amount of salary, that ensures respectability to the *man*, and reverence to the *vocation*. The Actor that
hopes

hopes to be valued and esteemed by those, whose good opinion is worthy the ambition of a noble mind, must learn to reverence and respect himself. Men of rank, of talents and acquirements will not court the acquaintance of the vulgar and illiterate, because the weekly stipends of these drones are, through the caprice, the folly, and false taste of the multitude, ten times above their *actual deserts*! Genius will preserve its elevation, and not descend to the level of a punster, a jester, a songster, or a buffoon. The profession boasts members, of both sexes, who are an honour to the vocation they have chosen, and an ornament to society at large. We wish, sincerely, most devoutly wish, these illustrious examples were more generally and more carefully copied. We should then hear no complaints of an "Actor's *proscription* from elegant society"—no complaints of his "unjust *denunciation*;" but, like "the professors of any science,"—we quote the words of a *recent** publication—"he would find that

A 2

profession

* We allude to the *Defence of the Profession of an Actor*, published in the course of the past week, by the same Bookseller, and, perhaps, (notwithstanding the *anonymous* author's assertion in his *dedicatory address* to Mrs. SIDDONS, that "he does *not* belong to the Profession") originating from the same source with the *statement* of the "glorious eight." Whoever this *anonymous* writer may be, he has our warmest and most cordial wishes for the *improvement* of the Profession. But in descanting on the vocation of an Actor, he appears rather to pourtray what an Actor *ought* to be, than what the generality of them at the present day *actually are*: he presents us with

an

profession a passport to carry him into the politest companies: he would find himself welcomed, like the philosopher and the poet, with a smiling countenance, and with open arms."

COVENT-GARDEN, SATURDAY *March 29, 1800.*

SPEED THE PLOUGH—*Morton.* ST. DAVID'S DAY; OR,
THE HONEST WELCHMAN—*Dibdin.*

WE see no reason to retract from the rigour of the sentence, which we passed on Mr. DIBDIN'S *newest* Entertainment, in our last week's report. It is, in every sense of the word, so contemptible a performance, that *criticism* will scarcely deign to honour it even with reprehension, but spurns

an *ideal*, instead of a *living* model. Of course, the arguments he grounds on *former* examples have little reference to *existing* circumstances. The reformation he so anxiously covets, must originate with the *individuals* of the Profession. This necessary preliminary, this *sine qua non* accomplished, public veneration and esteem will follow as the natural consequence. As the author of this *Defence* has, in treating of the *disease*, neglected to point out the only and infallible mode of *cure*, it is not improbable, but the Editor of THE DRAMATIC CENSOR, may be induced to avail himself of the *first*, and, it is hoped, an *early* opportunity of *vindicating the honour of the Theatrical Profession*, on more rational, more beneficial, and more practical principles. And he feels the more sanguine in his hopes of success, as instead of working on an *ideal* form, he means to hold up a *living* model for example and imitation. To name the fair *original* would be superfluous—all eyes must immediately look—all fingers point—to KEMBLE. Public notice is the just reward of merit.

'Tis the prerogative of greatness and of worth,

Digito monstrari et dicier HIC EST.

it

it, as unworthy of her serious notice. The only attempt at character is the part of *Owen*, which, as we have already observed, is very ably sustained by Mr. TOWNSEND. This Performer has an air in the second act, which contains a pleasing sentiment, though *awkwardly* conveyed, and too *prosaic* in the second stanza.

“ View yon mountain’s hoary head,
Mark the clouds that bind his brow !
View yon tombs of Bardic dead,
Men, whose minds are living now !

“ Owen, once of vice the slave,
Ne’er could raise his look so high
As yonder steep; each hallow’d grave,
Alike wou’d *shun* his guilty eye.”

To say nothing of the badness of the rhyme, “ *high*” and “ *eye*,” in the second and fourth line, “ *shun*” is a very weak and improper expression. *Daunt* would have been infinitely preferable. The possible guilt of *Owen* might afford a competent reason why *he* should shun the sight of the graves of his ancestors; but the *grave* (allowing for the metaphor) would have no cause, on that account, to dread and shun *his* gaze. We would recommend a trifling alteration:

• Owen, once of vice the slave,
Ne’er could raise his looks on high ;
Ne’er survey the hallow’d grave,
Where a parent’s ashes lie !

The music of this air is pretty, but bears, if we mistake not, a strong resemblance to BANNISTER’S
song

song in the *banquet scene* in *Feudal Times*. It exhibits a lamentable proof of the depraved taste of the age, that the only song in the whole Entertainment, which possesses the least claim to poetic sentiment, is passed over almost unnoticed, except by a few susceptible and enlightened individuals; whilst the coarse *Grub-street* ballads, sung by MUNDEN, FAWCETT, and SIMMONS, are tumultuously *encored*.

MUNDEN, as the representative of *Old Townly*, sustains a very contradictory and incongruous character. One moment he appears as a man of good natural parts, and sufficiently stocked with common sense: the next, he is represented as a being but one degree above an *idiot*. The scene in which he makes a *memorandum* of the nonsense so copiously retailed to him by *Peter Plimlimmon*, constitutes an incontrovertible evidence of the barrenness of the author's wit, of his incapacity as a writer, and his want of judgment as a *critic* of dramatic composition. The truth is, that such unqualified pretenders would never be able to obtain a footing on the stage, if unhappily the system of dramatic authorship had not experienced a total revolution. A dramatist has no need, in the present temper of the times, to be a *good writer*: literary attainments are entirely out of the question. If, to a mechanical knowledge of stage trickery, and effect, he joins a *quantum sufficit* of *subserviency* in one quarter, and *effrontery* in the other, and ~~is~~ willing to consult the interest of his pocket, at the
expence

expenditure of fair reputation and manly feeling, by humouring the debauched taste of the town, and working on the *distemper* of the public mind, his Theatrical success is almost infallibly secured. Two or three songs, tagged to a miserable dialogue of shreds and patches, which must be rendered as *grotesque* as possible, to afford the popular *caricature actors* and *favourite buffoons* of the Theatre scope for a full display of their illegitimate talents, complete the dose; and the undeserved success of certain modern dramatists stamps the receipt with the experienced sanction of *probatum est*. Formerly Actors were wont to study the Author; now the case is fairly reversed—Authors are obliged to study the Actor, and adapt their compositions to the circumscribed and *coarse* abilities of the Performer.

DRURY-LANE, MONDAY, *March 31, 1800.*

EGYPTIAN FESTIVAL—*Franklin*. THE PRIZE—*P. Hoare*.

Mr. HOARE is above the common level of modern stage writers. His productions are distinguished by neat humour and elegant diction. He possesses, likewise, the faculty, which few authors of musical pieces can boast, of *incorporating* his songs with the plot, and rendering the verse and the dialogue mutually subservient to each other. This is a point which Theatrical writers would do well to study and attend to. A song ought never to be lugged in, *par force*: it should come, or at least appear

pear to come, unpremeditated and spontaneously. Mr. HOARE's songs are entitled to another recommendation—they are written with ease, with neatness, and breathe appropriate sentiment.

The comic powers of BANNISTER and SUETT are seldom exerted to greater advantage, than in the characters of *Lenitive* and *Label*. Miss DE CAMP, as *Caroline*, displays a versatility of talent, which no other actress at the Theatre can lay claim to. Mrs. ROFFEY gives interest to the part of *Juba*.

COVENT-GARDEN, MONDAY, *March 31*, 1800.
MANAGEMENT—*Reynolds*. ST. DAVID'S DAY.—*Dibdin*.

We are not unmindful, and we beg leave to call the attention of our correspondent, Mr. SLUGDEN, to this circumstance, of the promise we made in the first number of the DRAMATIC CENSOR, to give an *analysis* of the Comedy of *Management*, as constituting one of the *novelties* of the present season. But our readers must be aware, that in a work of this nature—a work, perhaps, unparalleled in one respect, as being the *entire production of an individual, without any assistance or co-operation whatsoever*—it is absolutely impossible for the greatest exertion of human talent, to embrace every object of disquisition, as rapidly as objects arise and present themselves to view.

Non omnia possumus.

We have, likewise, to plead in apology for our delay the great length to which we were *compelled*,
by

by a love of justice and upright criticism, to extend our *Strictures* on the Pamphlet of the eight *malecontent* Performers of Covent-Garden Theatre. This, of course, trenched considerably on the *miscellaneous* department of our publication; but this cause being now removed, it is our intention, and we trust our readers have no cause to doubt the *sincerity* of our promise, to take an early opportunity of giving an ample report of Mr. REYNOLDS's play.

Mean while we shall briefly premise, with respect to the *Performance*, that the concluding part of our remarks on Mr. DIBDIN's New Entertainment apply in their fullest force to the Comedy of *Management*. The parts sustained by FAWCETT and MUNDEN, in the characters of *Mist and Worry*, are evidently written and adapted to the peculiar style of acting, which distinguishes these Performers. They cannot rank in the province of legitimate Drama, but are avowedly *caricatures*, which owe their popularity and success to the debauched taste of the town. In vain shall we look, as long as this practice is suffered to continue and encouraged, for the restoration of genuine Comedy.

The part of *Juliana Sutherland*, loses all its interest by the affectation of Mrs. POPE. There is an actress at the Theatre, whose unsophisticated manner would do justice to the character. 'Tis almost superfluous to add, that we allude to Miss MURRAY.

Illam quicquid agit, quoquo vestigia vertit,

Componit furtim subsequiturque DECOR!

DRURY-LANE, TUESDAY, *April 1, 1800.*

THE STRANGER—*Altered from Kotzebue.* THE SULTAN
—*Bickerstaff.*

Mr. KEMBLE and Mrs. SIDDONS are the grand pillars of support to the *Play*—Mrs JORDAN, as *Roxalana*, the prime source of attraction in the *Entertainment*.

COVENT-GARDEN, TUESDAY, *April 1, 1800.*

A CURE FOR THE HEART-ACHE—*Morton.* St. DA-
VID's DAY—*Dibdin.*

This Comedy was substituted in the room of *Speed the Plough*, in consequence of an *accident** which befel Mr. H. E. JOHNSTON. Of its general merits, we have expatiated at sufficient length in the third number of the DRAMATIC CENSOR, page 75, where the reader will likewise find a competent report of the *Performance*. We shall therefore only add, that the part of *Charles Stanley*, sustained on the former occasion by Mr. CLAREMONT, was this evening allotted to its better representative, Mr. POPE. Mr. LEWIS supported the character of *Young Rapid*, with juvenile vigour and animation.

* It seems this gentleman, in the full tide, flow, and torrent of his eloquence, was ambitious of adapting the *action* to the *word*. In his eagerness to show *how* he would kick *certain other persons*, he had the misfortune to kick *himself*!

DRURY-

DRURY-LANE, THURSDAY, *April 3*, 1800.

LOVE FOR LOVE—*Congreve*. THE FIRST FLOOR—*Cobb*.

We animadverted in our former number on the licentiousness of this Play; which, notwithstanding the ample curtailments and alterations adopted by the Manager, is still too gross for public representation. In other respects we readily concede to it its just portion of praise for wit, humour, sprightliness of dialogue, and happy delineation of character. The *Performances of this evening were appointed by command of their Majesties, who, with five of the Princesses visited the Theatre. We never saw them more highly diverted.

COVENT-GARDEN, THURSDAY, *April 3*, 1800.

SPEED THE PLOUGH—*Morton*. ST. DAVID'S DAY.—
Dibdin.

* In compliance with the request of our *Edinburgh correspondent*, we annex a specification of the *cast* of the characters. The veteran KING performed the part of *Sir Sampson Legend*; Mr. KEMBLE was the representative of *Valentine*; Mr. BARRYMORE, of *Scandal*; Mr. PALMER, of *Tattle*; Mr. BANNISTER personated *Ben*; Mr. SUETT, *Foresight*; Mr. WATHER, *Jeremy*; and Mr. HOLLINGSWORTH, *Trapland*. *Angelica* was ably performed by Miss BIGGS. Miss POPE represented *Mrs. Frail* with great ability, and Mrs. JORDAN, in the character of *Miss Prue*, displayed her accustomed excellence. Mrs. SPARKS performed the part of *Mrs. Foresight*.

THEATRICAL CRITICISM, &c.

HISTORICAL RETROSPECT OF THE PUBLIC CONTRO-
 VERSY, AND COLLATERAL PROCEEDINGS RELATIVE
 TO, AND CONNECTED WITH, THE THEATRICAL IN-
 SURRECTION OF THE "GLORIOUS EIGHT."

Nos OCTO turba sumus.

*Nos NUMERUS sumus, et fruges consumere nati,
 Sponsi Penelopæ, nebulones, Alcinoique,
 In cute curanda plus æquo operata juvenus.*

HAVING amply, fully, and impartially discussed the merits of the printed *Statement*, which may justly be regarded as the *Manifesto* of the eight *malecontent* Performers of Covent-Garden Theatre, we proceed now to an historical and documental detail of the several public facts, transactions, and polemical correspondence, connected with this famous controversy.

The first regular and explicit account of this Theatrical Insurrection, appeared in that justly fashionable paper, *The Morning Post*, under date of January 4, of the present year. As this account preceded the pamphlet of the *malecontents* by upwards of *six weeks*, we shall, for reasons which scarcely require an explanation, present our readers with a *literal* copy, and then offer such remarks on the subject, as may suggest themselves to our observation.

vation. The article in question was introduced under the head of

“ THEATRICAL DISPUTE.

“ The public have already received imperfect and inaccurate intimation of the disagreement which at present exists between the Managers and Performers of Covent-Garden Theatre; and, on a subject which may engage general attention and discussion, it may not be improper to say a few words.

“ There are many subordinate causes of complaint on the part of the Performers; but the three principal are—

“ 1. The raising the expences of Benefits twenty pounds.

“ 2. The stoppage of Orders of Admission.

“ 3. The raising of the Fine for rejecting a Part, from Five to Thirty Pounds.

“ The ground upon which the Managers justify the first of these, will not bear examination.—Mr. LEWIS has lately purchased a Share, at such a price as brings the value of the whole Theatre up to the enormous sum of £170,000. The Managers say, that besides the actual expences of the night, such as the weekly salaries, lighting the house, &c. they are entitled to *five per cent.* upon the capital of the Theatre; and that, therefore, they must raise the expences of a Benefit from £140 to £160 per night. The real expences of the house are considerably short of £140, and the Managers have, therefore, made a great advance beyond the due amount, in charging that sum; but the addition of £20, appears to be quite unwarranted. The true meaning of paying the *expences* of a Benefit is, to pay the actual expence incurred on that night; to pay the sum which is the difference between the Theatre's being shut, or being open. It is understood, the Proprietors on that night surrender up all their right of profit to the Performer. The money paid by a Proprietor for a share, is given for this right, for the chance of profit on all but Benefit nights; and the Proprietor alters the nature of a Benefit altogether, if he demands to share the profits with the Performer. At this rate, he may raise the expence of Benefits so high, that he may clear more profit on a night for
the

the benefit of a Performer, than he does on the average of his own nights, and may wish that the whole season were Benefits. Thus, instead of a night being a Benefit for a Performer, it may become a mere adventure, a farming of the Theatre by contract for the night ; and the Managers may be happy to find any man, Actor or not, who will engage the house on their terms. The very word, *Benefit*, implies a probability, if not a certainty, of clearing money ; it means that the Performer shall have something given him, some indulgence, that he shall have the Theatre on cheaper terms than a man bidding for it at an auction. Suppose the Proprietors charge six or eight per cent. on their capital ; such a charge, no money being lent, would not be illegal. It is a mockery, to call it charging interest on capital. Suppose they choose to say, Five per cent. is the interest for money lent on landed property : Theatrical property is not so secure, and the interest should be higher. Suppose they say this, who is to oppose them ? The Performers, who would then be in the same situation they now are. But the pretence for raising the price of a Benefit is ungenerous, as well as unjust. The nominal value of the Theatre has been nearly trebled, within thirty years : the raising of it's value, thus enormously, has been the work of the Performers, chiefly ; and, as a reward, the Managers now lessen their profits. Suppose the Performers, by very successful exertions, were now again to double the value of the Theatre, what would be the result ? Why, they would be charged forty or fifty pounds per night more on their Benefits. The present additional charge of twenty pounds will enhance the value of the property, the nominal amount of which will of course increase ; that amount being larger, the interest will be greater, and the expence of the Benefit must again be increased !—Thus the very act of charging the Performer this additional sum will operate again and again, according to the Proprietors reasoning, to render a further and a further increase necessary, till at last the Actor has no chance of putting a shilling into his pocket.

“ The refusal of Orders aggravates the oppression of increasing the expence of a Benefit ; as the Performers are able, by their Orders, to oblige now and then, with admissions to the Play, those

those who have befriended them at their Benefit. Thus the expence of a Benefit is increased, and the means of filling the house are diminished. Custom has made Orders as much the right of the Performer as his salary; and some performers justly calculate on them as property. A letter written some years ago, by Mr. HARRIS, acknowledges and asserts this right; it therefore appears strange, that a conduct contrary to it should have been pursued. We must observe, that Orders have not been refused entirely: they have sometimes been given, but at so late an hour, that they were of no use. The attempt was made, however, at the beginning of the season, as we understand, to abolish them altogether.

“ The enormous rise in Fines for refusing a Part, is equally hard on the Performer with other grievances. Considering the power of Proprietors in all respects, with a forfeit of Five Pounds, they can always controul a Performer; and the best proof of this truth is, that the Theatre has long flourished, the business has gone on happily, without so enormous a forfeit as Thirty Pounds. With such an engine in their hands, the Managers can cancel any articles of engagement: they may give Performers parts for which they not only are unfit, but which are degrading, and thus accumulate forfeit upon forfeit, till the Performer solicits his discharge.

“ There are many other subordinate grounds of complaint, such as not paying salaries when a Performer is sick. It has lately, and only of late, been stipulated in their articles, that their salaries shall not be paid when sick; but the Managers have professed that this was only done as a check upon those who might pretend to be sick; saying, any Performer really indisposed should never be curtailed in payment for absence. But we understand this forfeit has lately been enforced on all, whether really sick or not.

“ It would occupy too much space to describe all the complaints against the interior regulations of the Theatre, many of which are very offensive to the Actors. The whole are now preparing, in a Memorial to be laid before the LORD CHAMBERLAIN, to claim the KING's interference for redress. This step has not been taken till after every other has failed. Interviews and negotiations have long.

long been going on with the Proprietors, without producing any good effect. The Managers say, they will redress any individual individually; but they will not listen to a delegation from the whole body. The Performers, in answer to this, say, if they were to yield and take individual redress, the Managers would only patch up matters with the most popular Actors, and dismiss others; by this means the Managers would no doubt obtain their objects, and the Performers would be subdued in detail. Eight of the principal gentlemen have acted as a committee, viz. HOLMAN, POPE, the two JOHNSTONES, KNIGHT, FAWCETT, INCLEDON, and MUNDEN. They have the avowed concurrence of the whole Theatre, both ladies and gentlemen, with only one or two exceptions, who, no doubt, give their good wishes. The committee meet on the business once a week alternately at each other's houses; they have funds, and volumes of argument in their favour. We hope an accommodation will take place, and that the dispute will not come before the public; but at present there is every appearance of its producing one of the warmest contests recorded in Theatrical history. The Performers of Drury Lane join in sentiment with those of Covent Garden; and it is probable that the public will be called upon to give an opinion, which, no doubt, will be in favour of the oppressed party. We lament that such a disagreement should arise at a time when the Theatre is so liberally encouraged; at a time when its value is three times that at which Mr. HARRIS found it. We lament also, that the Performers should be harrassed and mortified at a time when their salaries have not been trebled, nor even increased. The salaries now paid at Covent Garden, are not more, either in the total, or with relation to individual Actors, than they were twenty-five years ago; it is, therefore, the more vexatious that they should be deprived of those conditions which their predecessors enjoyed. If the system were to be followed onward, as it has lately been pursued, no gentleman could feel himself easy, and the public would be doomed to see the drama mangled by ignorant, vulgar, incapable persons, who would stoop to all the degrading conditions imposed upon them. As they value Theatrical entertainments, the public will feel an interest in the dispute. And for this reason

reason, in duty to the public, to whom we owe a great duty, as well as Theatrical persons, we have laid before them an outline of the grounds of misunderstanding, that they may not be misled by interested or malicious misrepresentations."

It is worthy of remark, that one of the main reasons assigned by the *malecontents*, for the *publication* of their alledged grievances is, that *partial* and *private* communications had been made on the subject by the Proprietors of the Theatre, to their friends and connexions. They seem to insinuate that a very contrary line of conduct had been adopted on their part, and that *silence* had been with them the *order of the day*. But will any candid and intelligent reader, after attentively perusing the above account, and comparing it with the substance of the printed and official Statement of the *Malecontents*, believe, that it is possible for any writer, unconnected with the Theatre, and receiving no communication whatever from the Performers, to *anticipate* so faithfully, so fully, and so ably, the grounds of a dispute, which involves so much *local* and *personal* knowledge? We not only see the very arguments of the *malecontents* forestalled by six weeks, but even the very *authority* distinctly stated, on which they rest their claim to the privilege of *Orders*, as a matter of *right*; not, as it actually is, of *indulgence*. We see further, the sums and calculations minutely and correctly detailed, on which the *malecontents*, forgetting their actual situation, and fancying themselves *partners*, not *agents* in the firm, ground their right to an

equal participation of profit with the Proprietors. Can this accurate anticipation, this almost *marvellous* coincidence, we beg leave to ask, be the result of *chance*? Will any person, possessed of common sense, believe in the *possibility* of such an *accident*, which falls little short of the well-known *legend*, respecting the *Septuagint* version of the Hebrew Bible?

That the parties interested in the controversy, as well as the public in general, concurred with us in opinion, relative to the *source* whence this information must have originated, is plainly proved by the *apologetical* and explanatory article, which appeared in the *Morning Post* of the next Monday, January 6, 1800.

“ THEATRICAL DISPUTE.

“ From the nature of the article under this head in our paper of Saturday, it cannot be supposed we wish to injure the cause of the Performers of Covent-Garden Theatre; but an idea having been circulated that it came from some of them, and understanding that such a report might be prejudicial, since the negotiation is not yet terminated, and may possibly end in accommodation; we feel it our duty to declare, that the article alluded to was written by a gentleman engaged in this paper, without the knowledge of any person connected with any Theatre; and that it was inserted without communication with any one whoever. It was written as a piece of information to admirers of the Stage, on a subject generally discussed, but not so well understood; and it was inserted to shew the falsehood of a report, that all the newspapers were so much under the influence of the Managers, that they dared not state the truth to the public. Such influence we never have, nor ever shall acknowledge; but we are far from concurring in opinion with those who think new Pieces, new Performers, and Managers, if not wholly successful

cessful in their efforts to please the public, should be worried by the newspapers with the bitterness of a disappointed author, and the coarseness of a Billingsgate. Managers and Performers have a difficult duty to discharge, and they are entitled to indulgence, when they do not wilfully act contrary to that duty.

“ In some particulars of the statement we made on Saturday, there is reason to believe we were wrong ; such as that the Performers had raised a fund, &c. We should also state, that the forfeit for rejecting a part never has been enforced, but the danger to the Performer is the same.—There are other inferior points that might be further explained, but the principal facts, and the outline of the dispute, were stated accurately.—At present we shall forbear to say more on the subject, than to declare, if ever it comes before the public, we shall discuss it with impartiality, uninfluenced by either side.”

Here then, we see the Editor labouring, painfully labouring, and we fear with more pains than success, to eradicate the impression, which the former statement naturally produced in the public mind. He tells us, in *direct terms*, what we have no hesitation to pronounce a *direct falsehood**, that “ the arti-

* It may be proper to observe in this place, that none of the remarks we offer on the conduct of the *Morning Post*, in this particular instance, are intended to apply to the general character of that paper, or to impeach the EDITOR on the general scale of his *official* deportment. We flatter ourselves, that we possess some small share of literary knowledge and discernment, and we entertain no dread of compromising, or forfeiting that portion of critical knowledge and *acumen*, when we avowedly declare that the *Morning Post*, in our opinion, claims the *precedence*, and boasts a decided *superiority* over all its cotemporary rivals. As a vehicle of *fashionable* intelligence it stands without a *compeer*, and is, in our humble judgment, conducted with greater ability, greater genius, and, on the whole, with *greater integrity*, than any one single paper in the metropolis.

cle alluded to was written by a gentleman engaged in the paper, *without the knowledge of any person connected with any Theatre*, and that it was inserted *without communication with any one whatever !*" Those who are fond of the marvellous, are welcome to believe this assertion, if they please—*Credat Judæus Apollo*—we, for our part, have a greater share of *scepticism*, more of the *unbelieving THOMAS A DIDYMUS* in our composition.

Another remark which obtrudes itself upon our notice is, the pledge and promise given by the Editor to *discuss* this dispute between the Proprietors and *malecontent* "glorious eight," in the event of the controversy being submitted to public cognizance. As this event has long since taken place; as the *malecontents* themselves have *precipitated* this public appeal, we are at a loss to account for the Editor's remissness to fulfil a promise so solemnly and so publickly pledged. Are we to infer from his *silence* on this head—a *silence* in which he has persisted upwards of six weeks—that he now views the business in a *different* light? That his sentiments, with respect to the *justice* of the *revolt*, are entirely changed? and that after the example of many others, who have perused the pamphlet of the *mutineers*, he has found a complete *refutation* of their cause, in that very *Manifesto* which they so rashly promulgated, and so industriously circulated all over the kingdom, in *vindication* of their *revolt* and disobedience?

After

After the insertion of this *apologetical* article in the *Morning Post*, an *armistice* (as far as the public are involved in the controversy) of six weeks intervened, during which period, the *malecontents*, it should seem, were far from idle, being *busily occupied*, no doubt, in preparing for the ensuing campaign, which opened with the publication of the *formidable Statement*, generally attributed to the *classical* pen of the redoubted *Red-Cross Knight*; who is said to have acted as the instrument for concentrating into one common focus the consolidated energies of the incorporate "glorious eight." The Theatrical *Abbe Sieyes* is likewise supposed to have volunteered the assistance of his *legal* talents, knowledge, and experience, towards the completion of this wonderful literary production, which, it was predicted, could not fail to overwhelm the Proprietors with confusion, discomfiture, and disgrace. Great were the *anticipated* rumours of its irresistible powers of conviction, and proportionably great the public expectation.

At length the wonderful and wonder-working pamphlet made its appearance. But alas! it afforded only a fresh exemplification of the old fable.

Parturiunt montes nascetur ridiculus mus.

The *malecontents*, by an over-ruling *fatality*, instead of defending their own cause, were discovered to be absolutely fighting the battle of the Proprietors. The sensible and disinterested part of the community were surprized to see rebellion and disloyalty vindicated

vindicated on such shallow grounds, such flimsy pretensions, such self-eversive arguments; and the public at large, with an equal mixture of astonishment and regret, felt a double share of commiseration for eight oppressed and *needy* gentlemen, whose scanty incomes only exceed by *several hundreds of pounds*, what prior to the publication of their grievances, they were supposed to receive.

One individual, however, to whom a copy of the Statement was sent *gratis*—for his own *economy* precluded the chance of his becoming a *purchaser*—was of a different opinion. This *liberal* gentleman, on the receipt of the valuable donation, transmitted from his *terraqueous* abode, in the vicinity of *Barne's Common*, a most valuable epistolary acknowledgment to the donor, which is to be considered not merely as a letter of thanks, but as a *patent of instalment*. He therein dubs the *malecontents* by the title of the “GLORIOUS EIGHT,” and forms them into a *body corporate*. Nay more, he makes interest, and solicits for permission to have *his* name enrolled among the rebel host. He apprizes them that *eight* is rather an aukward, an *ominous* number; whereas, by admitting him to a share in the confederacy, to a *sop in the pan*, a *slice of the loaf*, they will constitute the *sacred nine*!—the *mystic cube*!—the *triangular totum*!—the *perfect oddity*!—so much admired by the venerable sages of antiquity, and acceptable to gods themselves!

Numero Deus IMPARI gaudet.

The

The letter runs thus—

To J. G. HOLMAN, Esq.

"MY DEAR SIR,

Theatre-Royal, Covent Garden.

"Ten thousand thanks for your attention to a poor old actor, sequestered in this *obscure* corner of the Thames*. You have called back my youth; but no period of Theatrical history affords such a group of honest fellows, asserting the rights of their brethren.

"Do ye want pecuniary aid? Let me be enrolled, that I may have a slice of the immortality that must eventually attach itself to so generous, so liberal an undertaking.

"Your affectionate fellow,

"J. MOODY.

"N. B. How gentlemanly is your book *made*! No extraneous matter; but conviction flashing in every paragraph! *Bless the glorious Eight!* AMEN."

The *honourable* testimony contained in this affectionate and prudent epistle, written by the *sequestered Lodger of old Father Thames*! gave a sanction to the cause of the *new-created octangular knights*. Accordingly, we find fresh glories showering thick upon them. Among the most *solid*, as well as most *valuable* and *necessary* tokens of sympathy, approba-

* But for the *official* manner in which this curious Epistle was published, and inserted in the newspapers by this *blessed* "glorious eight" themselves, we should have been tempted to consider it, notwithstanding the *honourable* testimony it conveys in the opinion of the *Morning Post* and the *Morning Chronicle*, in the light of a *libel*. The *benediction* at the close is truly *patriarchal*, and reminds us of the *charitable* priest, who refused to part with a farthing to a poor beggar, but readily offered his *blessing*. Probably these glorious *benefit mendicants*, were they to take this *inmate of the Thames* at his word, and apply for his *pecuniary aid*, would experience a similar spirit of benevolence.

tion

tion and esteem, which crowned their virtuous and disinterested labours, the *Bow-Street malecontent dinner* stands foremost on record. The seasonableness and propriety of this measure, in the case of men who had "*quarrelled*"—as the epigram in the *True Briton*, which we quoted in a former Number, humorously observes—"with their bread and butter," are too self-apparent, to stand in need of any comment. But we should be guilty of the highest injustice, were we to pass over certain collateral circumstances, concomitant on this convivial meeting, which we have reason to believe are not generally known. A succinct historical sketch, therefore, of the whole transaction cannot, we flatter ourselves, fail of proving acceptable to our readers. This, together with the remainder of the *documents* relative to their revolt, we propose to give in our next Number, in which we mean to conclude the subject, and wash our hands of the "*glorious Eight*," their squabbles and delinquency; as we are anxious to impart a more *miscellaneous* complexion to our publication. Mean while, we leave them to the full enjoyment of Mr. MOODY'S *charity*, and the rich consolations of his *patriarchal blessing*.

☞ The TITLE and INDEX to the First Vol. will be given in our next Number.

London: Printed by W. JUSTINS, Pemberton Row, Gough Square, Fleet Street.